



ARMY BENEFITS CENTER - CIVILIAN

SWCPOC at Fort Riley, Kansas

ABC-C News

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To reach the ABC-C: <https://www.abc.army.mil> or 1-877-276-9287 (TDD 1-877-276-9833)

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What is MRA?

Is MRA another acronym you have always heard but never knew what it meant? If you are in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) this could be very important to you. MRA stands for Minimum Retirement Age.



With FERS, you can retire with a basic retirement benefit as soon as you reach your MRA and have just 10 years of service. In addition, FERS allows you to retire voluntarily with a reduced annuity at your MRA with at least 10 years, but less than 30 years of service. This is known as a MRA + 10 immediate retirement.

The MRA is the first year in which you can receive an annuity. It varies according to the year you were born. For anyone born before 1948, the MRA is age 55. It increases gradually to age 56 for those born between 1953 - 1964 and goes up to 57 for those born in 1970 and after.

The following chart will help you determine what your MRA is:

Minimum Retirement Age (MRA)	
If you were born	Your MRA is age
Before 1948	55
In 1948	55 and 2 months
In 1949	55 and 4 months
In 1950	55 and 6 months
In 1951	55 and 8 months
In 1952	55 and 10 months
In 1953-1964	56
In 1965	56 and 2 months
In 1966	56 and 4 months
In 1967	56 and 6 months
In 1968	56 and 8 months
In 1969	56 and 10 months
In 1970 and After	57

Under FERS, you can retire with a full annuity as soon as your age and years of Federal service match any of the following retirement combinations:

- At least your MRA with 30 years of service

- At least age 60 with 20 years of service or more
- At least age 62 with 5 years of civilian service or more

If You Leave Before Retirement Age...

If you do not want to wait until retirement age, you can withdraw all the money you have contributed toward the FERS Basic Benefit Plan. It will be paid to you with a market rate of interest; that is, the same rate of interest earned by the U.S. Treasury securities purchased by the Civil Service Retirement and Disability Fund (the account that contains all employee and employer contributions to CSRS and FERS). *However, you permanently give up your right to a basic retirement benefit based on that service. If you take your money out, you cannot put it back in if you return to work with the Federal government later.* It is usually better to leave your money in FERS so that you can receive a monthly annuity when you retire. This is because you pay very little compared to the benefits you will eventually receive from the basic retirement benefit.

Unfortunately, these options are only available to FERS and not Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees. For more information on FERS and CSRS retirements, please visit the ABC-C website at <https://www.abc.army.mil> or call us toll free at 1-877-276-9287 or 1-877-276-9833 (TDD). Overseas telephone numbers are listed in this Newsletter.

Have You Heard About the Upcoming FEGLI Open Season?



In honor of the Federal Employees' Group Life Insurance (FEGLI) Program's 50th anniversary, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is conducting an Open Season from September 1 through September 30, 2004. Open Season elections will become effective on the first day of the first pay period that:

- Begins on or after September 1, 2005, (yes, 2005) and
- Follows a pay period during which the employee is in a pay and duty status.

All employees who are eligible for the FEGLI Program can participate. For more information on the FEGLI Open Season, please visit the OPM website at www.opm.gov/insure.



Look What's Happening at TSP!

Effective July 1st, TSP has undergone some major changes to their loan program:

- A \$50 fee is deducted from the amount of each new loan.
- You may no longer have two general purpose loans at the same time. (You may have one general purpose loan and one residential loan.)
- When you pay off a TSP loan, you are not eligible to apply for another loan of the same type for 60 days.

In an effort to continually improve customer service, TSP is now offering a toll-free number to its customers. The new number is 1-TSP-YOU-FRST (1-877-968-3778) and TDD at 1-TSP-THRIFT5 (1-877-847-4385). International callers who cannot access the new toll-free numbers should continue to use the old ThriftLine number at 1-504-255-8777 or 1-504-255-6000. Also, the TSP Service Office has expanded their hours to Monday through Friday, 7:00 am – 9:00 pm Eastern Time (ET). Visit the TSP website at www.tsp.gov for more information on this exciting program!



Did You Know...?

That 27,155 TSP transactions were completed this last Open Season?

ABC-C Telephone Numbers - Overseas

Belgium	0800-78245
Germany	0800-1010282
Italy	800-780821
Japan	00531-1-20378
Korea	00798-14-800-4766
Netherlands	0800-0232739
Saudi Arabia	1-877-276-9287
United Kingdom	08-000857723

On a Personal Note



Gosh, it's July already! Hard to believe that we are six months into 2004!

It has been my pleasure over the last six months to meet with many of you while conducting ABC-C overview briefings. More briefings are scheduled for the remainder of the year so that we can meet with you to answer your questions regarding your benefits and entitlements.

Many of you have provided feedback to us on the types of services you need and expect from "Your ABC-C". We welcome and encourage you to ask us those tough questions. We are up to the challenge and stand ready to provide you with the latest and most accurate information. Also, if you wish to provide items of interest or any questions that we can address in future issues of our Newsletter, just let us know.

We have just completed the 1st Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season of the year. There were approximately 27,000 of you who did something with your TSP account (increase/decrease/terminate, etc.). The next Open Season is scheduled for October 15 through December 31, 2004. At that time you will be able to increase the maximum amount you can contribute to your TSP account. (CSRS maximum will be 10%; FERS will be 15%). It's never too early to start thinking about where you're headed in planning for your retirement years!

Speaking of retirements, as of the end of June 2004, there were 3,874 of our fellow Army co-workers who retired. Remember, it's never too early to request your retirement estimate so that you can start planning what you'll be doing when you retire. In order to better serve you, we request that you submit your retirement package 90 to 120 days in advance of your expected date of retirement. Keep in mind that September, December, and January are traditionally our busiest times of the year to retire! Think EARLY. We want to provide you the fastest and most accurate service we can.

ABC-C is a Division of SWCPOC, at Fort Riley KS

Send comments or suggestions to:

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